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END OF AN ERA
'Casual' cast talks final season. 16-17

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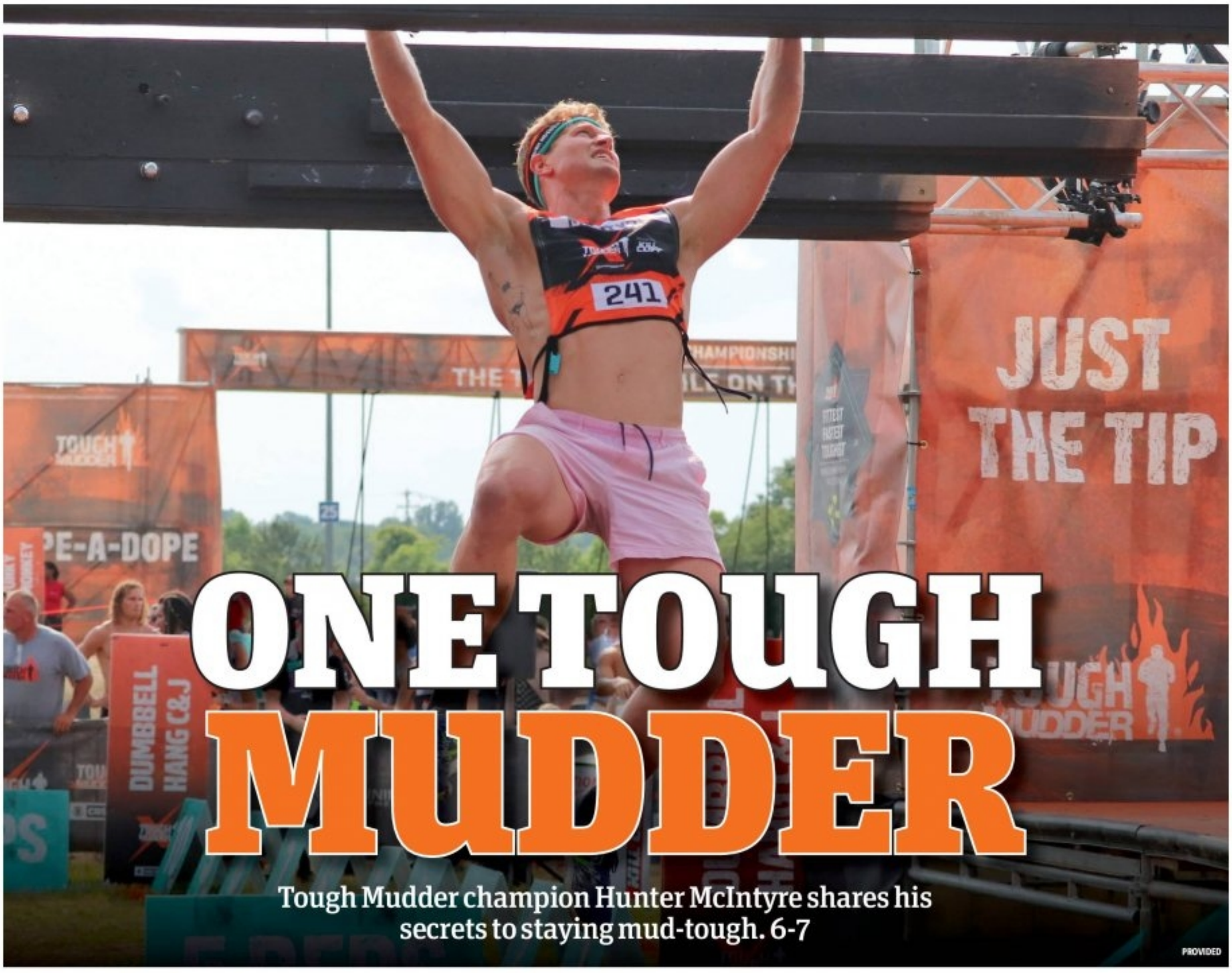
Matt Jones sees an opportunity with Eagles. 21

The best things to do in Philly this week. 15



ONE TOUGH MUDDER

Tough Mudder champion Hunter McIntyre shares his secrets to staying mud-tough. 6-7

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5 THINGS TO KNOW

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NIKKI M MASCALI, REPORTER

Disclaimer: I'm not one to exert myself too much beyond my daily walks with my dog. But I really admire people who have the drive to do things like Tough Mudder, so it was a treat to talk to the reigning TMX champion Hunter McIntyre for today's story. Hunter nabbed the title for the second year in a row on CBS Saturday, but even more importantly, he answered several burning questions of mine about his workout regime, shoes and that badass TMX course — and even revealed two surprising food habits. Find out what they are on pages 6-7 or at **metro.us.**

PALESTINIAN TEEN VOWS TO RESIST AS A LAWYER

1 A Palestinian teenager released by Israel on Sunday after completing a prison term for kicking and slapping an Israeli soldier said she wanted to become a lawyer so she could continue her struggle against the occupation of the West Bank. Ahed Tamimi, 17, became a hero to Palestinians after the incident last December outside her home in Nabi Saleh, a village that has for years campaigned against land seizures by Israel, leading to confrontations with the Israeli military and Jewish settlers. Israelis regarded the incident, which Tamimi's mother relayed live on Facebook, as a staged provocation. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas described Tamimi as "a model of peaceful civil resistance ... proving to the world that our Palestinian people will stand firm and constant on their land, no matter what the sacrifice". He made the statement published by the official news agency Wafa after he met Tamimi and her mother. Wearing her trademark black-and-white chequered Arab scarf when she returned home, Tamimi greeted dozens of well-wishers. Outside the home of a villager killed by Israeli forces, she urged continued struggle against Israel's occupation.

HOF CLASS TAKES ITS PLACE IN COOPERSTOWN

2 Six players reached the pinnacle of their illustrious careers when they joined the Baseball Hall of Fame during a sun-splashed ceremony Sunday afternoon in Cooperstown, N.Y. Four hitters – Chipper Jones, Vladimir Guerrero, Jim Thome and Alan Trammell – joined the Class of 2018 in front of fans wearing jerseys and hats from the teams they represented. The foursome was joined by two pitchers — Trevor Hoffman and Jack Morris — to complete the — talent-laden, six-member class. More than 50 returning Hall of Famers attended the ceremony, which capped a week long celebration in the small town in upstate New York. The newest inductees brought the number of all-time Hall of Famers to 323. Jones' eyes watered as he watched a video showing highlights from his 19-year career with the Atlanta Braves. He was a .303 lifetime hitter with 2,726 hits, 468 home runs and 1,623 RBIs, all with the Braves. The switch-hitter spoke about his childhood in Pierson, Fla., where he fell in love with the game. He spoke in front of family members including his parents and his 9-month pregnant wife, Taylor, who is due Monday.

MASSIVE WILDFIRE SPREADS TO 80,000 ACRES IN REDDING, CALIFORNIA

3 A deer stands on a road covered with fire retardant as the Carr Fire burns in the area of Redding, California. A Redding firefighter and bulldozer operator were killed battling the fast-moving Carr Fire that has charred more than 80,000 acres and destroyed hundreds of homes. The fire is 5 percent contained.

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NIGERIA TO SEND AIR FORCE TO FIGHT BANDITRY

4 Nigeria will deploy its air force and 1,000 security personnel to fight outlaws in the northwest of the country, President Muhammadu Buhari said on Sunday. The move underscores how security has broken down across much of Nigeria, where an ineffective police force has exacerbated already-weak enforcement, particularly outside urban areas. The military is now deployed in more than 30 of the 36 states. Nigeria is tackling a nine-year conflict with Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa in the northeast. There is also a conflict across much of its hinterland between farmers and herders that is now more deadly than the war against those insurgencies. In addition, there are oil-fueled militancies in the Delta to the south and banditry and kidnappings throughout much of the country. Criminality has plagued the northwest for years, particularly around Zamfara state and its border with Kaduna state, though a recent spate of kidnappings and killings has put the region in the public eye.

GREAT-GRANDMOTHER KILLED, TRIED TO SAVE KIDS

5 A 70-year-old woman and her two great-grandchildren died as she tried in vain to save them from a wildfire that raged through an area of northern California and engulfed their home, officials and family members said. Two firefighters have also died and another 12 people are missing. More than 38,000 people remained under evacuation orders on Sunday in and around the city of Redding, about 160 miles north of the state capital Sacramento. The Carr Fire, which has destroyed more than 500 buildings, is the deadliest and most destructive of nearly 90 wildfires burning from Texas to Oregon. The Carr Fire has charred 89,194 acres of drought-parched vegetation since erupting last Monday. Redding Police Sergeant Todd Cogle confirmed that the three bodies discovered at a fire-ravaged home on the outskirts of Redding were two children and their great-grandmother. The victims identified by relatives on Facebook and in news media reports were James Roberts, 5, his sister Emily, 4, and their great grandmother, Melody Bledsoe, 70.

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Make way for the SEPTA Key

SEPTA paper transfers are getting ditched as all payments are transitioned to the SEPTA Key.

SAM NEWHOUSE
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For years, buying paper transfers on SEPTA has been a daily ritual for commuters who need to travel on multiple modes of transit. But soon, the SEPTA Key will change that, bringing Philadelphians a much-needed simplification to their travels.

Starting Aug. 1, commuters won't be buying transfers in the paper form anymore, or ever again. SEPTA paper transfers are going out of use, permanently, to be replaced by the SEPTA Key, as of the end of the day on July 31.

That doesn't mean there won't be transfers available on the bus, subway or trolley — it just means you will need a SEPTA Key to get one.

"We're getting rid of the paper product, we're not getting rid of your ability to transfer at a reduced rate," explained Leslie Hickman, chief officer for revenue operations at SEPTA. "You can still transfer if your money is in your Travel Wallet and get the benefit of the reduced rate."

SEPTA riders can still grab transfers, if they're switching between transit modes headed in the same direction, and get a reduced fare on the second leg of the journey ($1). You can even get a retransfer.

But in the past, passengers paid their fare, then handed a buck to the conductor or station agent and got a paper transfer. You would bring that paper transfer to the next mode of transit on an approved transfer station and boom, you were ready to ride.

As of Aug. 1, you can only make that transfer if you have a SEPTA Key and have funds in your Travel Wallet to pay for a transfer. The Key will track your ride, know you're transferring, and automatically charge the transfer fee. (Metro previously erroneously reported SEPTA paper transfers would end Aug. 31 in the July 16 article "SEPTA Key is gearing up for Regional Rail launch. Metro regrets the error).

"You have to have a Key, or you're not getting the best value out of your ride," Hickman said. "If you're a hanger-on [without a Key], and come Aug. 2 you need to transfer [without a Key], you need to pay the full monty. You're either paying $2.50 or a token."

The elimination of SEPTA paper transfers, along with multiple other paper products SEPTA is phasing out as it transitions to the Key, is also a big step forward for SEPTA's sustainability goals.

"We're getting rid of the paper product, we're not getting rid of your ability to transfer at a reduced rate."
Leslie Hickman

"Moving away from paper products saves not only the environment but money for the customer," Hickman said.

SEPTA is making advances on every front with its Key as well as its many other operations.

New locomotives recently went into use on the Regional Rails, where passengers are gradually being transitioned over to using the SEPTA Key as well.

And on July 26, SEPTA announced that the Broad Street Line subway stop on Pattison Avenue, nearest to Philly's sports arenas, will be renamed "NRG Station." NRG, an energy company, will also be funding various repairs, improvements and modifications at the station.

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Hunter McIntyre thrives on being dragged through the mud

Reigning Tough Mudder X champ Hunter McIntyre talks shoes, his workout regime — and why he chooses sugar (lots of sugar!) over veggies.

NIKKI M. MASCALI
nikki.mascali@metro.us

Hunter McIntyre always loved sports, but it wasn't until he discovered Spartan Race in 2011 that he knew what he wanted to be when he grew up: a professional at obstacle course racing (OCR). Fast-forward seven years, and the 29-year-old just won his second consecutive Tough Mudder X championship on Saturday.

Metro caught up with Hunter McIntyre, who unveiled his favorite part of the 1-mile Tough Mudder course, his training regime and two of his most-shocking food habits.

Hunter McIntyre won the Tough Mudder X championship this past weekend. ALL PHOTOS PROVIDED

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Did you like to play in the mud as a kid? [laughs] No, I didn't like to play in the mud as a kid. Everyone calls them mud runs, that's the fun name for it, but the races that we do, whether it's the Tough Mudder or Spartan, they're very challenging and engaging and a lot of fun.

"The most important thing is to eat foods that are easily digested and good for you to get ready for the next workout."

Hunter McIntyre

What's your favorite — and least favorite — parts of the 1-mile Tough Mudder X course? I absolutely hate barbed wire, but I'm a big fan of anything that is heavy and challenging to pick up, flipping a big tire, picking up a big sandbag, overcoming a heavy obstacle you have to lift up or climb up. The sport is both skill-based and brute-strength based, and I love it.

How many shoes would you say you go through during a competing season? It's terrible, I'm like a total diva. I have a whole outdoor closet that has about 30 or 40 pairs of shoes. I probably get rid of about five to 10 pairs every year — but I wear five different pairs of shoes a week.

I've got pairs I use for the gym, for outdoor gym workouts, for running, for trail running and I have my race shoes, which are very light, but they only last two or three races. I use Nike for training, and for most road racing, I use New Balance. For outdoor stuff, I use Merrell.

What's your training regime leading up to the Tough Mudder X finals? I go to training camps in the mountains every spring for about eight to 12 weeks to get altitude training, and I usually buckle down and don't do anything but workout, eat food, play video games and go to bed early.

What's your diet like? I eat probably about 1,500 to 2,000 calories worth of pancakes a day, that's just easy and delicious. I eat a lot of Honey Nut Cheerios, a lot of yogurt and a lot of steak. The most important thing is to eat foods that are easily digested and good for you to get ready for the next workout.

I almost never eat vegetables. I see people always eating salads and stuff, and I've never seen anybody do anything badass because they ate a salad.

Do you ever wake up and say, "I don't wanna today"? I don't ever stay in bed, but there's definitely days I wake up and know there's no way I'm going to hit the numbers I want to today, so I'll just trade it out for a hike or a swim or a rock climb. I usually take one day off fully each week so I'm supercharged by the time I get to the gym the next day.

With tens of thousands of fans, what's been most surprising to you about being in the public eye? It's interesting to see what really resonates. I can post something funny, like me eating a bug, and it gets lots of comments and likes. But I posted a picture of me with a sort-of transformation to stop running so much and lift a lot more weights to get ready for a couple events. I posted that I got a lot slower, and it got more engagement than I'd ever gotten in my entire life.

And finally, what is something unhealthy you do that might surprise people? I eat probably 300 to 400 grams of sugar a day. I don't eat, like, spoonfuls of sugar, but right after a workout, I'll have a Snapple or a FitAid — they're not bad sugars if you work hard. I'll eat ice cream at nighttime to get my calories in. I eat a whole jar of honey a week, a big one, I'm drinking maple syrup constantly. I definitely look leaner the more sugar I eat. Most doctors would yell at me, but it's the truth.

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Reporter Kaitlan Collins asks a question during a press conference by US President Donald Trump and Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in the East Room of the White House on Feb. 13, 2017 in Washington, DC. GETTY IMAGES

THE FOREMAN FORECAST: LET THE SUNSHINE IN

ANALYSIS

TOM FOREMAN

CNN's Tom Foreman is the author of the book "My Year of Running Dangerously."

As I write these words the summer sun is streaming outside my window, pouring onto the offices of government here in D.C. — from the Trump White House, to the many departments, and even around the Pentagon across the river. Yet, I fear it must be dark inside, because in all the decades of my professional life I have never known an administration so intent on locking every door and shuttering every window.

What I mean is Team Trump has shown a marked distaste for letting the public — you — have any look at what they do except as they choose to present it. Just last week one of my colleagues here at CNN, Kaitlan Collins, was banned from a White House press event. Team Trump says she asked the president an "inappropriate" question. A lot more say it was just a question they didn't like so they punished her.

The White House "daily" press briefing has virtually vanished. It's been more than 500 days since the president's last real, solo press conference. In that time, you could have traveled to Mars and back, and still have been the first one in the room. Politico has an excellent report right now on how the Defense Department has clammed up, with Secretary James Mattis not conducting a single on-camera briefing since April. Once public schedules for officials are now hidden. Simple answers to simple questions are brushed aside.

I know. Many Trump supporters rejoice in all this. After all, why give the "fake news" even the time of day? They'll just get it wrong!

But that's a convenient cop-out. When any elected official and his/her team deny access, refuse answers, and run from questions, it's nothing but a cheap shot to then say the media is getting the story wrong. This isn't some special assessment being unfairly leveled against Donald Trump. It was true for Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, Bush, Clinton, the second Bush, and Obama, and they all took hits for the White House's ever-advancing tide of secrecy.

And yes, I have a vested interest. I'm a reporter. But I'm also a person who knows some history, and I've never seen evidence of any country thriving by persistently keeping its people in the dark.

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Trump threatens US government shutdown over border wall

More than three-fourths of Republicans approve of Trump's handing of Immigration.

"I would be willing to 'shut down' government if the Democrats do not give us the votes for Border Security, which includes the Wall!"

Donald Trump

President Donald Trump said on Sunday he would allow the federal government to shut down if Democrats do not fund his border wall and back immigration law changes, betting that maintaining a hard line will work in Republicans' favor in November congressional elections.

However, a disruption in federal government operations could backfire on Trump if voters blame Republicans, who control Congress, for the interruption in services.

"I would be willing to 'shut down' government if the Democrats do not give us the votes for Border Security, which includes the Wall! Must get rid of Lottery, Catch & Release etc. and finally go to system of Immigration based on MERIT! We need great people coming into our Country!" Trump said on Twitter.

Americans are divided along party lines on immigration, and 81 percent of Republicans approved Trump's handling of the issue, according to a Reuters/Ipsos poll released this month.

The Republican president has threatened a shutdown several times since taking office in 2017 in a bid to get immigration priorities in congressional spending bills, especially funding for a wall along the southern U.S. border. Trump has asked for $25 billion to build the wall.

"I don't think it would be helpful, so let's try to avoid it," Republican Senator Ron Johnson, chairman of the Senate Homeland Security Committee, said on CBS' "Face

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the Nation."

Congress must agree on a spending measure to fund the government by a Sept. 30 deadline.

Although Republicans control both the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, disagreements between moderates and conservatives in the party have impeded a speedy legislative fix.

Standoffs over spending levels and immigration led to a three-day government shutdown, mostly over a weekend, in January and an hours-long shutdown in February.

The House in June rejected an immigration bill favored by conservative Republicans.

The Republican president has made tougher immigration laws a centerpiece of his administration, from the first ill-fated travel ban on people from predominantly Muslim nations to the current battle raging over the separation of illegal immigrant children from their parents at the U.S.-Mexico border.

A federal judge on Friday urged the U.S. government to focus on finding deported immigrant parents whose children remain in the United States. REUTERS

WILDFIRE

Greek seaside town remembers lives lost to wildfire

Mourners gathered in a church in the Greek coastal town of Mati on Sunday where they wept and lit candles in memory of those killed when a massive wildfire swept through the popular resort near Athens earlier this week.

Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras is facing fierce recriminations for the government's response to the fire and has promised a national plan to avoid a repeat of the disaster.

GETTY IMAGES

Rescue crews are still looking for survivors of the blaze which began last Monday in Mati, 17 miles east of Athens, as the death toll rose to at least 91 with dozens more injured.

"Some people survived but for those who died I wish they are well in heaven," said Theano Tsikoulou.

"Fires were burning everywhere, my husband and I were going and putting them out so that our house would not be burnt," she said.

A total of 25 people remain missing while 59 bodies have been identified and a further 28 are still to be named, the fire brigade said on Sunday. Another four people died in hospital.

Tsipras has accepted full political responsibility for the disaster and pledged a series of changes, including on illegal and haphazard construction which is thought to have worsened the blaze.

The main opposition New Democracy party, which leads in the polls, earlier called on the government to say how many people remain unaccounted for and criticized Tsipras' television appearance on the night of the fire as a "sorry show."

The wildfire left the area dotted with burnt-out trees, ashen earth and destroyed buildings as a clean-up operation continues.

Downpours on Sunday hit parts of the region after heavy rainfall and flash floods in areas on Saturday, making it harder for the authorities trying to locate survivors and locals hoping to salvage what they can from the disaster.

But there were also signs of a return to normality as a children's camp, which closed due to the blaze, was reopened on Sunday. The mayor of Athens invited youngsters affected by the fire to come along.

"The smiles should return," George Kaminis tweeted. REUTERS

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A Kardashian lands in casinoland and AC's (hopeful) celebrity culture

Kourtney Kardashian made an appearance Saturday at the Hard Rock.

A.D. AMOROSI
letters@metro.us

Mark the date: On the last weekend of July 2018, the Kardashian family infiltrated the world of casinos, and, boastfully, on two coasts.

On Sunday, Kim Kardashian West, Khloé Kardashian, Kris Jenner and Kendall Jenner hosted tables at the first annual 'If Only' Texas Hold'Em Charity Poker Tournament on the floor of The Forum in Inglewood, California. The for-charity event focused on the City of Hope's Future Hope Committee and its continued outreach toward the clinical research and treatment for cancer, diabetes and additional life-threatening diseases.

On Saturday night, and without the benefit of charitable anything, Kourtney Kardashian hit the red carpet for the grand opening of the brand new Sugar Factory American Brasserie at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Atlantic City. She came dressed appropriately in-sugary pink silks (a Marina Moscone dress is what tipsters tell me), sipped and nibbled the candy shoppe's wares, then split. This Saturday's dose of reality show Kardashianism came mere weeks after Kourtney's boyfriend (or ex-husband?) Scott Disick popped up at the Hard Rock's DAER Nightclub to check out a DJ/rap performance by Ludacris, only to find a Disick-lookalike also hanging within the confines of the Atlantic City dance club's VIP suite. If you won't take my word for the dueling would-be Disicks (as if one wasn't enough), you can check out the New York Post's Page Six photo spread comparison.

This is not the place for Kardashian bashing, and there's no need for it, besides. They've earned their money through good old-fashioned sweat, sponsorship, reality television, app formation and make-up doyenne dollars. As for hanging out in casino Atlantic City in July, that's not even a big deal or novel concept: Before she went West, Kim Kardashian hosted a watery party at The Pool After Dark at Harrah's Resort in 2012, right after she hit up a Beyonce concert at Revel's Ovation Hall opening weekend.

The reason such celebrity is a big deal now, is that, if the new Atlantic City of Hard Rocks, Ocean Resort, refreshed Tropicana properties and the likes wishes to keep up with its Vegas brethren

Kourtney Kardashian was in Atlantic City this past weekend. GETTY IMAGES

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in the present — or even hot Philadelphia nightlife spots such as NOTO in Chinatown (who recently brought in the likes of Migos and Travis Scott to host parties), and South Philly's Vanity Grand strip club (who, within the played year, had host nights with Cardi B and Meek Mill) — it has got to keep up with the Kardashians. It must pursue their fellow household brand name commodities for parties and hosting duties. Or at least get more look-a-likes like Scott Disick hanging around as his doppelganger.

"People love celebrities, and celebrity culture and no one knows how to get them, then throw a big party with them like Joey Morrissey," said Ocean Resort Casino live entertainment executive Lou Branchinelli about his fellow executive, Managing Director and HQ2 night club overlord Morrissey. Morrissey got his street schooling education and master degree in top-tier nightlife by creating and/or promoting massive parties for Peter Gatian (Sound Factory, Roxy), in Manhattan, as well as his

"People love celebrities, and celebrity culture and no one knows how to get them, then throw a big party with them like Joey Morrissey."

Lou Branchinelli

own independent bashes that put the Hamptons on the map for millennial nightlife. "No more, though," said Morrissey of the Hamptons and Downtown New York City. "If I bring 10,000 people to a neighborhood in the Hamptons or Manhattan, they'd have a problem with me," said Morrissey. "If I bring 10,000 people to a club in Atlantic City, they'll throw me a parade."

Morrissey, so far, has brought Mark Wahlberg, "America's Got Talent" Judge Heidi Klum, Academy Award-winning actor and singer Jamie Foxx, and comedian Russell Peters to his club for party hosting, hanging and DJing duties. Victoria's Secret models Leomie Anderson and Shanina Shaik hit up HQ2 just weeks after its end-of-June opening night.

Just two weeks ago he got NBA basketball legend and ever-present pitchman Shaquille O'Neal to spin at HQ2 under the nom de plume, DJ Diesel — but not before lowering the floor and re-doing the just-built DJ booth to accommodate Shaq's 300+ pound, 7-foot frame. Together, Morrissey and Branchinelli will bring top-notch celebrity-drawing spinners Green Velvet (Aug. 12) and Steve Angello (Aug. 11) and Dada Life (Aug. 4) to his state-of-the-art dance den. "People want to hang where celebrities hang, plain and simple, and celebrities want to hang someplace where they feel safe and can let their hair down," said Morrissey. "It's a great combination."

Let's get Kim Kardashian back here pronto and tell her to bring her husband.

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Pat King
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READER WRITE-INS:

SHARE THE ROAD MEANS SHARE IT WITH CARS, TOO!
I agree that pedestrians rule. But is it necessary to rule so mercilessly? 1.) Why can't pedestrians show just a tiny bit more consideration for the driver trying to make a turn? Pedestrians often stroll through the crosswalk, one by one, completely ignoring the cars. It's easy enough to stop for two seconds to allow a driver to turn. Or maybe speed up a bit to allow a turn. C'mon people, we can make this work! 2.) Most drivers do not want to block crosswalks. But pedestrians will begin to cross the moment they have the light. Again, if the pedestrians just waited a few seconds, the drivers blocking the crosswalk are often able to continue through as the cars in front move forward. There seems to be such contempt for the drivers sharing our streets. And an unwillingness to give an inch to any four-wheeled vehicle. How about we give the driver a break once in a while? He or she is a person also trying to navigate the city. Or maybe just rid the streets of cars completely? I'm OK with that, too.
- **Larry Adel**, *Metro US reader*

STOP WITH THE FIREWORKS ALREADY!
This goes out to those "undesirables" who are still going around blasting off fireworks, your M-80s and whatever else! Just stop it! You have two, three holidays to enjoy this activity. I live in a sketchy neighborhood as is and it's a pain to always hear any extra and unnecessary noise. They've been bothering myself and the neighbors with this since mid-June. Go inside the house and play video games like everyone else. The police are so quick to want to find those posting illegal signs around the city, then the same should apply these knuckle-heads who are found "poppin' off shots" still. It's illegal in some cities to even be in possession of fireworks. These people need to be penalized if found playing with them well into the night as they do long after that holiday has expired.
- **Gerald Stokes**, *Metro US reader*

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The winning caption from Fiona Chang, *Metro New York reader*

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Aries Take a proactive approach when helping others. Offer suggestions as well as incentives to get the support you need to get things done on schedule.

Taurus Focus inward and make changes that will help you hone your skills, add to your qualifications or update your appearance. Personal growth will improve your attitude.

Gemini Traveling, attending business meetings or resolving a pending matter with a friend or relative should be on your agenda. Don't let someone mislead or take advantage of you.

Cancer Make physical changes that will help you get into shape, or adjust your attitude so you can take advantage of your cultural background, knowledge and experience.

Leo Speak up, share your plans and listen to advice, but when it comes time to make a decision, you must rely on your knowledge and experience to help you make the best choice.

Virgo Don't rule anything or anyone out. Positive change is within reach. Someone or something unusual will spark your interest and motivate you to try something new.

Libra Pour your energy into something you believe in. Make changes at home that will make your life more comfortable, affordable or convenient. It's up to you to make things happen.

Scorpio Don't get railroaded into something you don't want to do. Anger will stand in the way of productivity. Concentrate on what's doable, and reject high-pressure tactics.

Sagittarius Take care of matters personally. If you trust someone else to speak or negotiate on your behalf, you will miss out on benefits you deserve. Emotional deception or manipulation is apparent.

Capricorn A unique approach to the way you earn your living or handle your cash will be lucrative. Don't be afraid to try something new or get into a joint venture.

Aquarius Speed things up a bit and see how much you can accomplish. Partnerships look promising. Discuss plans and find out where you stand. Distance yourself from inconsistent or erratic individuals.

Pisces Dream a little dream and turn your ideas into reality. A joint venture will spark your imagination and encourage you to use your skills differently. A physical improvement will lift your spirits. EUGENIA LAST

Rock out with Radiohead.

5 Fun things to do this week

From The Carters, Jay and Bey, to Radiohead and food trucks – this week is charged up.

A.D. AMOROSI
letters@metro.us

There's big music everywhere you turn in the next three days, but that doesn't mean there isn't something for the foodies and families out there too. Here's our guide to the best things to do in the city this week.

Theatre Philadelphia's Workshop Series

Philly's best theater-scene booster (and the peeps behind the annual Barrymore Awards for theatrical distinction), wrap their educational workshop program with storyteller Robert Smythe on how to best present and marketing your ideas and get audiences to pay for that.
July 30, 6 p.m., The Drake Theatre, 302 S. Hicks St., $10+, theatrephiladelphia.org

Beyonce and Jay-Z

Now that Jay-Z got that pesky Parkway Made in America problem with Mayor Kenney solved, he can concentrate on wife. Or, at the very least, make some fine music with Beyoncé on the Philly stadium stop of The Carters' "On the Run II" tour.
July 30, 7:30 p.m., Lincoln Financial Field, 1 Lincoln Financial Field Way, $49.50+, ticketmaster.com

The Carters are coming to town. ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Homesick Philly Initiative with Food Trucks

Before Philly's top tourist bureau/marketing agency brings local cuisine to East Coast cities (Baltimore, Washington, Boston) where Philadelphia expats have moved (and miss us), they'll host a gathering of food trucks at Dilworth Plaza. As if having spritzing fountains wasn't enough, Jennifer Carroll and Billy Riddle (Spice Finch), Marcie Turney (Lolita, Barbuzzo) and Kurt Evans (South Kitchen & Jazz Parlor) serve up the goods.
July 31, 11 a.m., City Hall's Dilworth Park,15th & Market St., free (pay as you go), visitphilly.com

Radiohead

Without a new album to promote (yet!?), moody, drone-y daring old Radiohead present hours of fun music from its most recent projects. Look for Thom Yorke and Co. to dust off "A Wolf at the Door," a "Hail to the Thief"-era track they haven't touched in eons.
July 31-Aug. 1, 7:30 p.m., Wells Fargo Center, 3601 S Broad St., $49.50, weellsfargocenterphilly.com

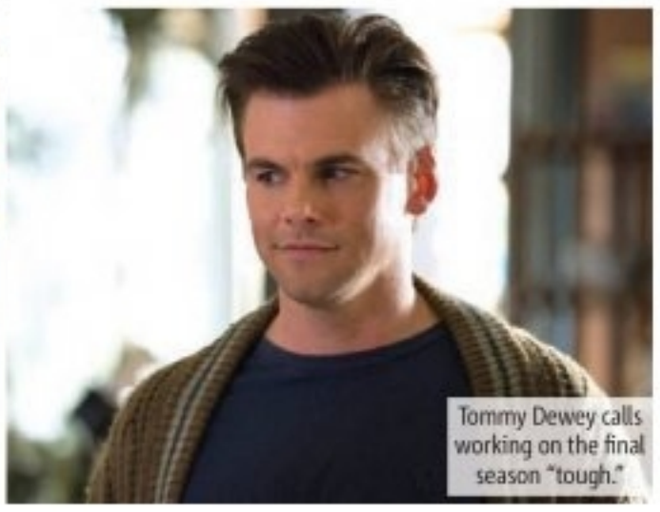
Parks on Tap: Mount Pleasant

Sure, there's a pop-up beer garden at the center of this East Fairmount Park, but, children of all ages can dig the local artisan demonstrations, a multitude of lawn games and educational tours inside this grand mansion's example of Colonial-era architecture.

Aug. 1-5, 5 p.m., Mount Pleasant Mansion in East Fairmount Park, 3800 Mount Pleasant Dr., free; food and beverages priced separately, Register at parksontap.

Michaela Watkins and the cast of 'Casual' talk the end of an era

Michaela Watkins calls the final season "bittersweet."



Tommy Dewey calls working on the final season "tough."

Tara Lynne Barr calls the series a "real blessing."

One of Hulu's first critically acclaimed series is coming to an end this week.

ANDREW HUSBAND
letters@metro.us

At one point during the latest season of "Casual," which premieres Tuesday on Hulu, Valerie Meyers (Michaela Watkins) tells her younger brother Alex (Tommy Dewey), "I'm going to miss this." With an understanding smile, he responds, "Me, too."

It's one of the more poignant moments from the season four trailer, because the next eight episodes will be the show's last.

Created by Jason Reitman, Zander Lehmann and Liz Tigelaar in 2015, "Casual" was one of first shows to usher Hulu into the realm of acclaimed programming. By the time season three's final episode aired in August 2017, however, no one knew if the series would be back. (Hulu didn't announce its return until that October.) When the news finally did break, the cast and the crew felt a great sense of relief.

"We were delighted and thrilled to find out we were getting another season. And then it was bittersweet to find out it was going to be our last season," recalls Watkins. "But at the same time, the scripts were that much more meaningful, and shooting it felt that much more heavy, in an immediate and thrilling kind of a way."

As Tara Lynne Barr, who plays Valerie's daughter Laura, explains it, knowing this season would be their last assured everyone at "Casual" that they would get to the chance end the story on their own terms.

"I have a lot of friends who have been through heartbreaking cancellations. You hear about them all the time in this business," she says.

"So all of us felt really, really grateful that we were going to have the space to finish the season. Not just for the viewers, but for us as actors and for our crew, the producers and the writers. It felt like a real blessing, like we were able to get the closure we all needed as coworkers and friends."

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Dewey adds that finishing the story provided the cast with some much-needed creative fuel. "Because the real experience of ending the show dovetails with the experience of these characters moving on to new phases of their lives, the fantasy and reality got intertwined a little bit," he says. "We were able to use some of those feelings about the show's end when portraying these characters in their last moments in the story.

"You know, this was tough," Dewey says, "but it was only tough because it was so great."

Even so, everyone admits they're going to miss the show, and especially their respective roles, a lot. "Alex strikes a tone that really resonates with me," says Dewey. "I grew personally in many ways from confronting some of the ideas around Alex. It's a nice way to vent, because he doesn't suffer fools. I am probably a little too polite because I hear my sweet, southern mother's voice in my head, so it was nice to play Alex and tell the world what he thought of it."

"I'm going to miss her like I miss a bad boyfriend who can sometimes be a real a–hole, but you love him despite his wart," Tara laughs when asked about Laura. "I know she wasn't always the most sweet, charming or likable character, but I hope people, especially women, watched her and thought to themselves, 'What a pain in the ass… but I like her.'"

As for Watkins, whose smile can practically be heard over the phone, letting go of Valerie is both a heartbreaking prospect and a welcome measure of change. "I really started to take Val home with me. She's a good one, and I'm going to miss her big time," she says. "I want this show to feel like when you finish a really good novel and then you cry a little bit. You're going to miss everyone you spent all this time with because that's it. There's no more pages."

The fourth and final season of "Casual" premieres Tuesday, July 31 on Hulu.

It's the end of the road for the "Casual" crew. ALL PHOTOS HULU

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Barack Obama and Joe Biden are

New York Times best-seller Andrew Shaffer turns the ex-POTUS and VP into cool sleuths with "Hope Never Dies."

A.D. AMOROSI
letters@metro.us

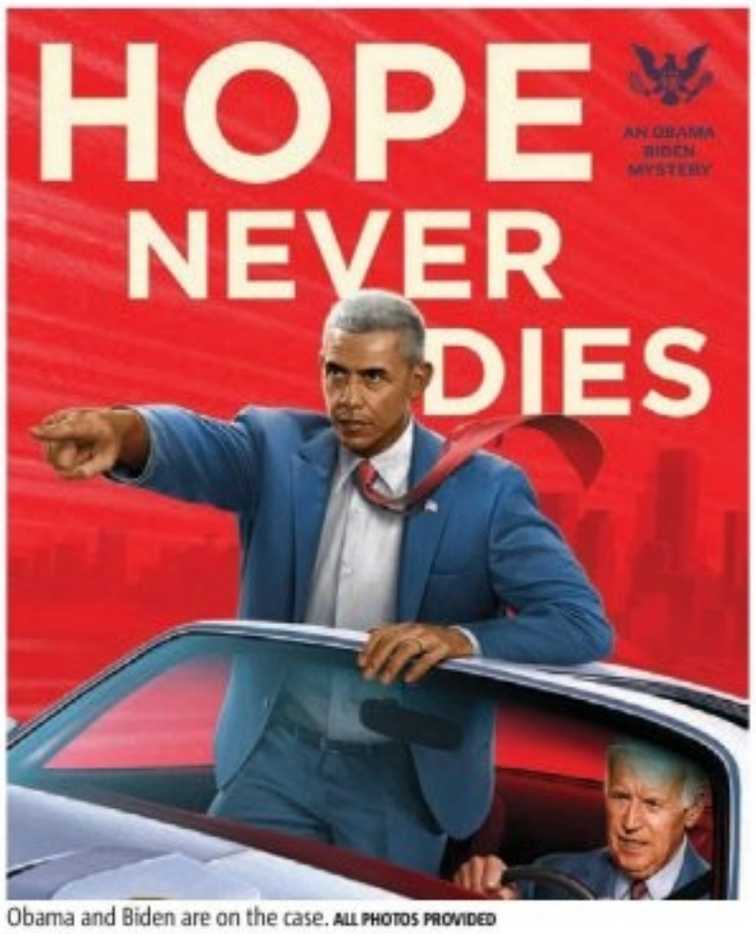
For anyone who looked at President Barack Obama and Vice President Joe Biden and thought, "Man, these guys look cool. They'd make a dynamic crime-busting duo," Andrew Shaffer's your man with the plan.

The catty, witty author behind "Great Philosophers Who Failed at Love," and "Literary Rogues: A Scandalous History of Wayward Authors" — to say nothing of his Trump satire, "The Day of the Donald" — hit Amazon and The New York Times' best seller list with "Hope Never Dies: An Obama Biden Mystery." To celebrate this landmark (and its tale of intrigue and investigatory smarts when it comes to solving the current opioid epidemic), Shaffer appears at the Free Library of Philadelphia's main branch, July 30.

"I started brainstorming for this a week after they were out of office, and wrote it during the summer and fall of 2017 while they were out of the public eye," says Shaffer; during that period much of their real-life legacy became important. "It worked out to where I could set the book during last summer, and have it be somewhat believable that they could have spent some time reconnecting as friends while solving a murder case. There are passages where the fictional Obama and Biden muse on their legacies. It's wish-fulfilment more than anything."

Rather than have Obama or Biden be distinctly political in their rhetoric ("I knew we wouldn't be getting their actual thoughts on Trump and the state of the country until around the midterms, when they're back on the campaign trail stumping for Dems"), Shaffer stuck to his, and their guns, and made them cool-guy sleuths on a mission. And in a fast car, a la "Starsky & Hutch."

"For the majority of the book, they're tooling around Wilmington in



Obama and Biden are on the case. ALL PHOTOS PROVIDED

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men of 'Mystery' to this author

either Joe's neon-green 2017 Dodge Challenger T/A or Obama's armored Cadillac SUV–two cars that neither man owns in real life," says Shaffer.

The car of the cover, which sets the tone for "Hope Never Dies'" action, was designed by Doogie Horner and illustrated by Jeremy Enecio. "The cover was fun to design, and I chose a white Camaro because it seemed like a car Joe would drive," says Horner. "Also, the T-top was perfect for Obama to stand up out of, and point at whoever they're pursuing."

Making action heroes out of famous politicians is a far cry from Shaffer's other books. "Great Philosophers Who Failed at Love," and "Literary Rogues: A Scandalous History of Wayward Authors" were, in the author's words, "really gossipy takes on their personal lives that compared their work with their often messy personal lives."

Writing the Obama-Biden book on the heels of "The Day of the Donald" didn't make him feel at all schizophrenic, as Shaffer penned the Trump trope during 2016's Republican presidential primaries. "It was a satire about a reality TV star becoming president ... who would have guessed? Not even Trump thought it would happen. I took shots at both sides of the political spectrum in the book, although — spoiler — Trump was the villain. That said, Hillary voters were despondent, and I wanted to turn despondency into something positive. No more dystopian novels."

There's no dystopia to be found in the positivist "Hope Never Dies." Shaffer seems to have known that there would be a cheerful bromance between Obama and Biden between the larger-than-life twosome, dating back to Barack's time in the Senate.

"The weird thing about Obama and Biden is that they started as antagonists in the Senate," says the author. "They were on the same team, but at odds with each other — divided over issues, age and a other factors. Even on the campaign trail, they weren't friendly. Their friendship blossomed over the years. They had a one-on-one lunch on a weekly basis. The bromance snuck up on us all. It wasn't until the final months of their last term that America collectively realized what we had, and what we were about to lose. I didn't want to see them end, which was what really kickstarted the book."

Andrew Shaffer

While focusing on that bromance, the book refuses to turn either man into caricatures, even though elements of their relationship (Obama frequently rolls his eyes at Biden's schemes) is exaggerated. "This isn't The Onion's Joe Biden, washing his convertible in the White House driveway with his shirt off," says Shaffer.

So does Shaffer know if either man has read the book? "Judging by Obama's literary pedigree and recommendations, I have a feeling this book might be a little too light for him," he says. "Biden might pick it up, though. I never heard from Trump after writing 'The Day of the Donald,' but that might be because his reading material skews in a different direction. I wouldn't expect someone who doesn't read his own daily briefings to have time for an entire novel."

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Your last-minute back-to-school checklist

Here are a few things you may not have thought about.

PAT KING
patrick.king@metro.us

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With most colleges beginning classes sometime next month, you probably already have the basics covered when it comes to your dorm essentials. You've already picked out the posters and other decorations you are going to display in your tiny corner of your dorm. But there are some of things you may not have considered before heading off to your fall semester away from home. Here is your back-to-school 2018 checklist.

Make sure you have enough storage

A common thing students do when they leave the nest is abandon any idea of living a "zen life." While it is tempting to bring all your clothes and favorite decorations from home, you must remember that you now have a roommate who will need as much space as you do. Make sure that proper closet and under-bed storage units are on your list.

Get your flu shot before the fall semester

This is crucial. You will be thrust into tight quarters with others right before flu season begins. According to a survey by the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases in October 2017 among 1,005 US college students 18 to 24 years old, found that "although most college students in the US (70%) believe it is important to get an annual influenza vaccine, less than half (46%) say they typically get vaccinated."

Some of the people you'll meet at school may well be those interesting students who will broaden your horizons and help you become the person you hope to be. But do you really trust them to be proactive enough to get their flu shots before the fall semester? You need to be focused on your classes and the lay of the land at school, not laid out with some hacking cough you got from some dude down the hall.

Choose a bank close to campus

This might seem like a pretty minor thing to think about, since it's generally easy to find ATMs around most college campuses. But if you are trying to conserve money, you probably don't want to be throwing money away on machines that are out of your bank's network. Some banks charge around $2.50 on top of the normal ATM fees for every time you decide to take out cash for pizza. That adds up. Also, by having a branch nearby, you will also be able to make deposits to your account in case you find a job close to campus or receive birthday checks from your grandma in the mail.

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Jones sees an opportunity

The Eagles picked up Jones in free agency.

JOVAN ALFORD
jovan.alford@metro.us

Former Florida Gators star Matt Jones is looking to find a niche with the Eagles. GETTY IMAGES

Training camp. It is a time for all different levels of NFL players to work on their game for the upcoming season. For established players such as Eagles quarterback Carson Wentz, safety Malcolm Jenkins, and others, they get a chance to fine-tune their skills, while also working on different plays and packages.

However, for rookies and players on the roster bubble, it is a prime opportunity for them to show the Philadelphia Eagles coaching staff why they should either make the 53-man roster or practice squad.

The latter of these two statements best describes what running back Matt Jones is facing. Jones is not a rookie but is one of those players fighting for a roster spot in a crowded backfield.

The fourth-year running back out of the University of Florida was signed to a two-year, $1.5 million contract by the Eagles in free agency. When he was initially signed, the thought was that Jones would fill the void left by LeGarrette Blount, who joined the Lions in free agency.

Last season, the Eagles carried four sometimes five running backs on the roster. And heading into this season, that can surely happen again with Jay Ajayi, Corey Clement, and Darren Sproles all guaranteed to make the team.

If that is the case, then it potentially leaves one spot left on the 53-man roster to fight for. Jones understands the situation that is in front of him and looks forward to the competition.

"I see an opportunity man and I'm chasing it," said Jones after Friday's training camp practice.

The Seffner, Fla. native will be competing with Wendell Smallwood, Donnel Pumphrey, and Josh Adams for the fourth running back spot. Each of these running backs does something uniquely different, which makes the competition that much harder.

Coming out of the University of Florida, Jones was known as a big, physical back who is going to fight and get you those tough yards.

Over his three-year collegiate career, the 6-foot-2, 239 lbs. running back racked up 1,431 yards on 297 carries and 11 touchdowns. His best season came as a junior, where he rushed for 817 yards on 166 carries and scored six touchdowns.

After a productive career at Florida, Jones was drafted by the Washington Redskins in the third round of the 2015 NFL Draft.

In two seasons with Washington, Jones had 950 rushing yards on 243 carries and six touchdowns. He also had eight fumbles, however, in his short stint with the Redskins.

The former Florida Gator had a tumultuous time in the nation's capital, which came to an end last offseason. Washington moved on from Jones after he skipped involuntary workouts and asked to be traded or released.

Shortly after being released from Washington, the Indianapolis Colts picked up Jones. With Indianapolis, Jones bounced between the active roster and practice squad.

Fast forward to this summer and Jones feels that he has improved, being more than just a big, bruising back.

"I feel like I am way more than that. I got so much better during the offseason. I feel great," he said.

After practice, Jones elaborated more on the things that he is working on in training camp.

"Everything. Everything down pact as far as anything that got to do with a running back, I'm working towards it."

"Just with my hands out, we are lining up at receiver and have to get a linebacker off, or getting low at the second level, cutting, bursting out of your cut, anything that applies to a running back right now I'm doing it," he added.

When practice was over on Friday, Jones stayed outside on the field to do extra catching drills with a tennis ball, doing whatever it takes to make himself a versatile running back in today's NFL.

Luckily for him and the other players, they will get a chance to show off all the work they've put in on Aug. 9 in the Eagles' first preseason tilt against the Pittsburgh Steelers.

However, until then, Jones has one goal in mind this summer.

"My personal goal is just to grind. Grind, grind, grind, nonstop and I can't let up. I see an opportunity that I can grab."

490

Matt Jones rushed for 490 yards in his first NFL with the Washington Redskins in 2015. Jones put up 460 yards on the ground in 2016.

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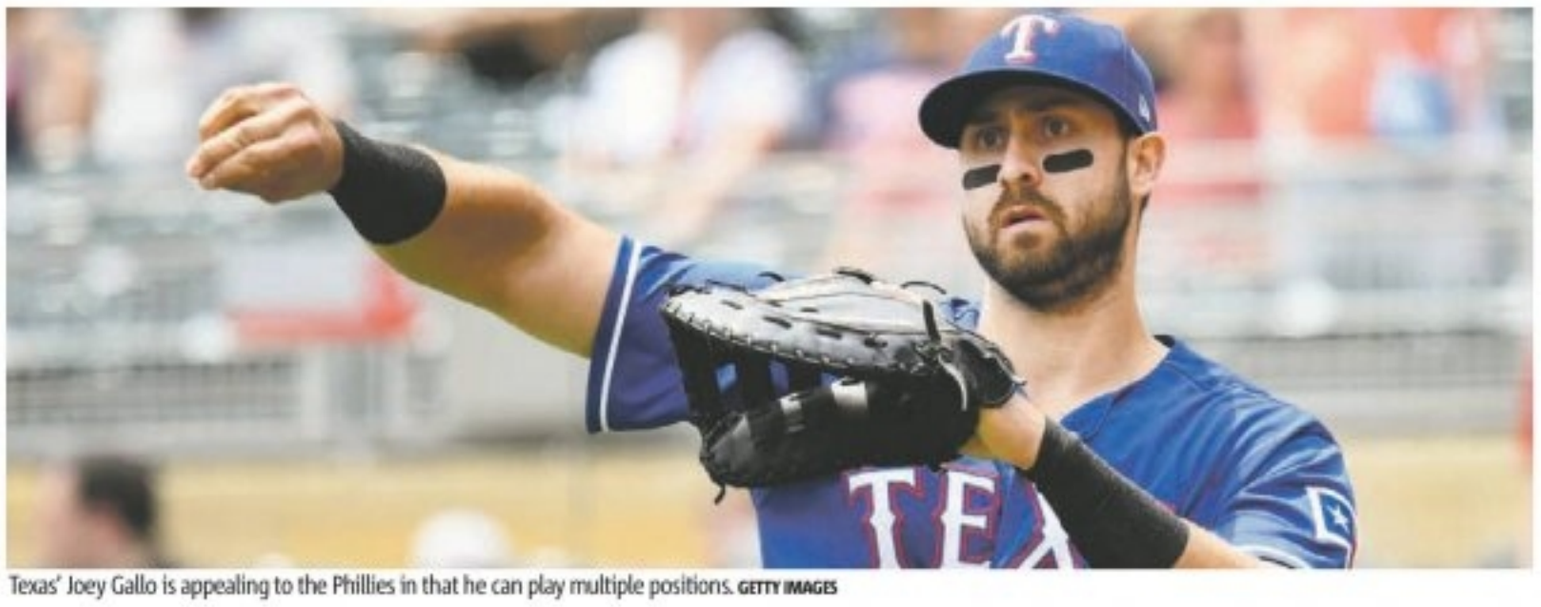

Texas' Joey Gallo is appealing to the Phillies in that he can play multiple positions. GETTY IMAGES

Phillies still looking for upgrades

Asdrubal Cabrera might not be the only addition.

JOVAN ALFORD
jovan.alford@metro.us

The MLB trade deadline is less than 48 hours away and the Philadelphia Phillies are still looking to upgrade a couple positions of need. One of the positions that the Phillies were looking to acquire was an infielder.

Over the last couple of weeks, the Phillies were rumored to be interested in Eduardo Escobar, Mike Moustakas, and Asdrubal Cabrera. All guys who can provide some offensive firepower to their lineup.

The Phillies missed out on Escobar, who was traded to the Arizona Diamondbacks earlier in the week but were able to grab Cabrera. Philadelphia acquired the New York Mets second baseman on Friday in exchange for minor league pitcher Franklyn Kilome.

This season with the Mets, Cabrera was slashing .277/.329/.488 with 18 home runs and 58 RBIs. Cabrera will be splitting time between shortstop and second baseman with the Phillies.

He made his debut on Saturday night against the Cincinnati Reds, going 0-for-4 with a strikeout.

With the infielder issue solved for the Phillies, they can now turn their attention to acquiring a fourth outfielder.

Last week, it was reported that Philadelphia was talking with the Toronto Blue Jays about Curtis Granderson and considering a trade for Adam Jones out of the Baltimore Orioles.

While there has not been much discussion about Granderson, we did find out some new information about Jones.

According to Dan Connelly of The Athletic, the Phillies, Cleveland Indians, along with other multiple teams have contacted the Orioles to see if the 13-year veteran would waive his 10-5 rights and accept a trade.

To no avail, it seems like Jones will be staying in Baltimore for the rest of the season.

"Based on information gathered from multiple sources, it doesn't appear Jones is going anywhere, at least not for the remainder of this season," wrote Connelly in his latest story.

If Jones does want to stay in Baltimore, then the Phillies must turn their attention to other options.

Another one of those outfield options could be Joey Gallo of the Texas Rangers. Evan Grant of the Dallas Morning News reported that the Phillies along with the Indians are expressing the most interest in the 24-year-old infielder/outfielder.

This season, Gallo is only slashing .191/.307/.465, but has 26 home runs and 59 RBIs. Not to mention, he already has 139 strikeouts and 54 walks through 100 games.

None of these numbers are appealing and actually go against the Phillies' offensive model. However, what does have teams interested is Gallo's contract situation and his ability to play multiple positions.

Aforementioned, he is only 24-years-old, but could become arbitration-eligible 2020 and can't hit free agency until 2023. In layman's terms, this means that whoever acquires Gallo will have him under team control for a considerable amount of years.

Along with his team-friendly contract, Gallo has shown the ability to play left field (62 games), first base (32 games), right field (five games), and center field (1 game) this season.

It should be interesting to see if the Phillies can grab themselves either an extra outfielder or reliever in the bullpen by Tuesday's 4:00 p.m. ET deadline.

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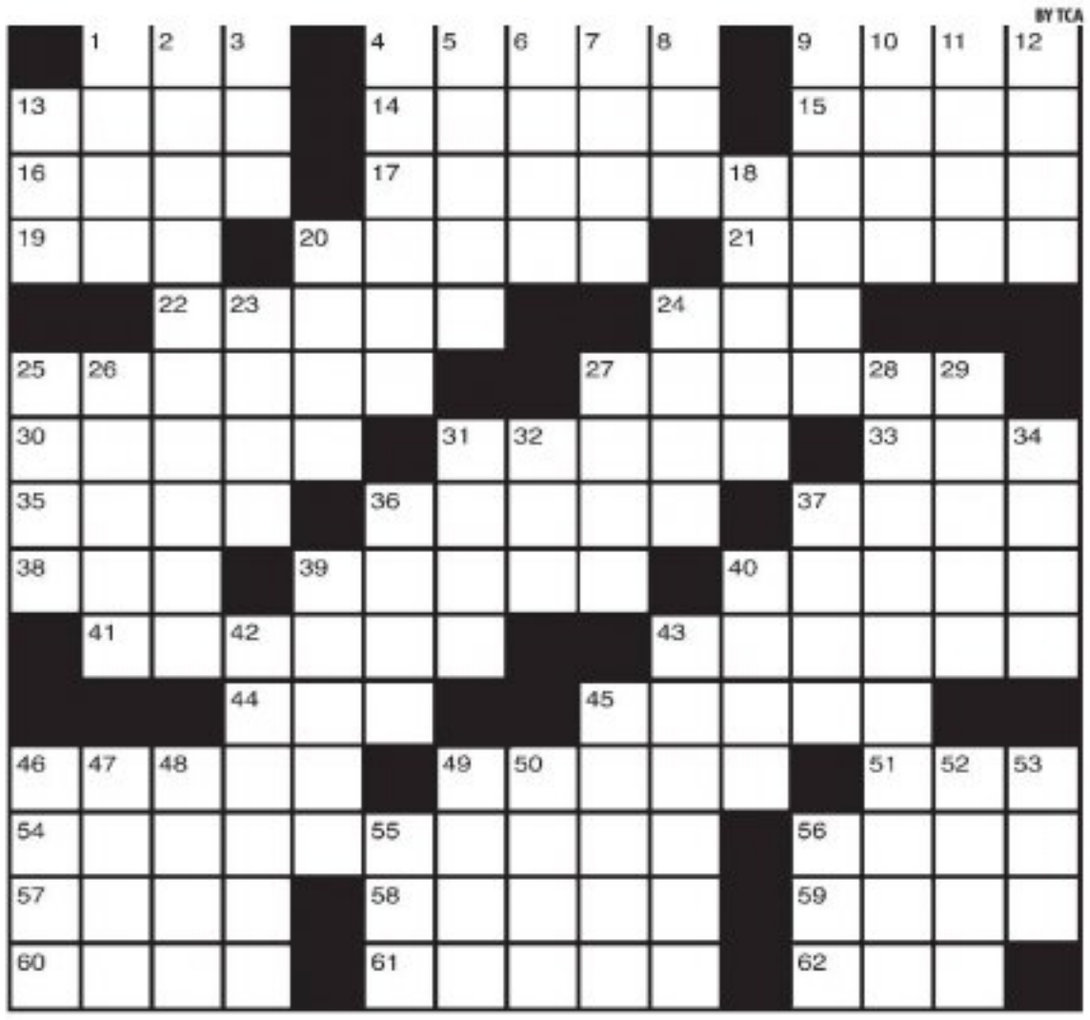

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ACROSS

1 Piece of china
4 Peruvian natives
9 Unsightly skin mark
13 Window glass
14 India's first prime minister
15 Explorer Marco
16 Fissure; split
17 Rockets
19 __ pedestal; lovingly honored
20 Night lights
21 Uptight
22 Traveler's stop
24 Mustang or Maxima
25 Mistake
27 Most underhanded
30 Steve or Woody
31 Native of the Far East
33 Journal
35 Put on weight
36 Dense group of bees
37 Minstrel's instrument
38 "I __ Rock"; Simon & Garfunkel hit
39 Part of USMC
40 Native of Italy's capital
41 Weapons storage facility
43 Barney __; Fred Flintstone's pal
44 Bullring cheer
45 Paddled boat
46 Higher than
49 Bit of parsley
51 Wine color
54 Signed up
56 Dishonest one
57 Give a hoot
58 Wed without fanfare
59 __ in a blue moon; seldom
60 Colors
61 Birch tree with catkins
62 Word of disgust

DOWN

1 Abel's brother
2 Strange; alien
3 Teacher's favorite
4 Foot part
5 Himalayan nation
6 Burn slightly
7 Rainbows
8 Take to court
9 Globe
10 Nickel or dime
11 Lofty mountains
12 Got up
13 In favor of
18 Laundry problem
20 Flabbergast
23 Daytime shop window sign
24 Boston __ chowder
25 Long story
26 Pack animal
27 Gentlemen
28 Getting some shut-eye
29 Sum
31 Amiss; askew
32 Maple tree secretion
34 Actor Hackman
36 __ as a boil
37 Gray wolf
39 Nat King and Old King
40 Ladder piece
42 Films
43 Oakland athlete
45 Thin pancake
46 Prefix for angel or enemy
47 Actor Bridges
48 Meanie
49 __ down the river; betray
50 Nudge
52 Every
53 Rap's Dr. __
55 Oolong or pekoe
56 __ Diamond Phillips

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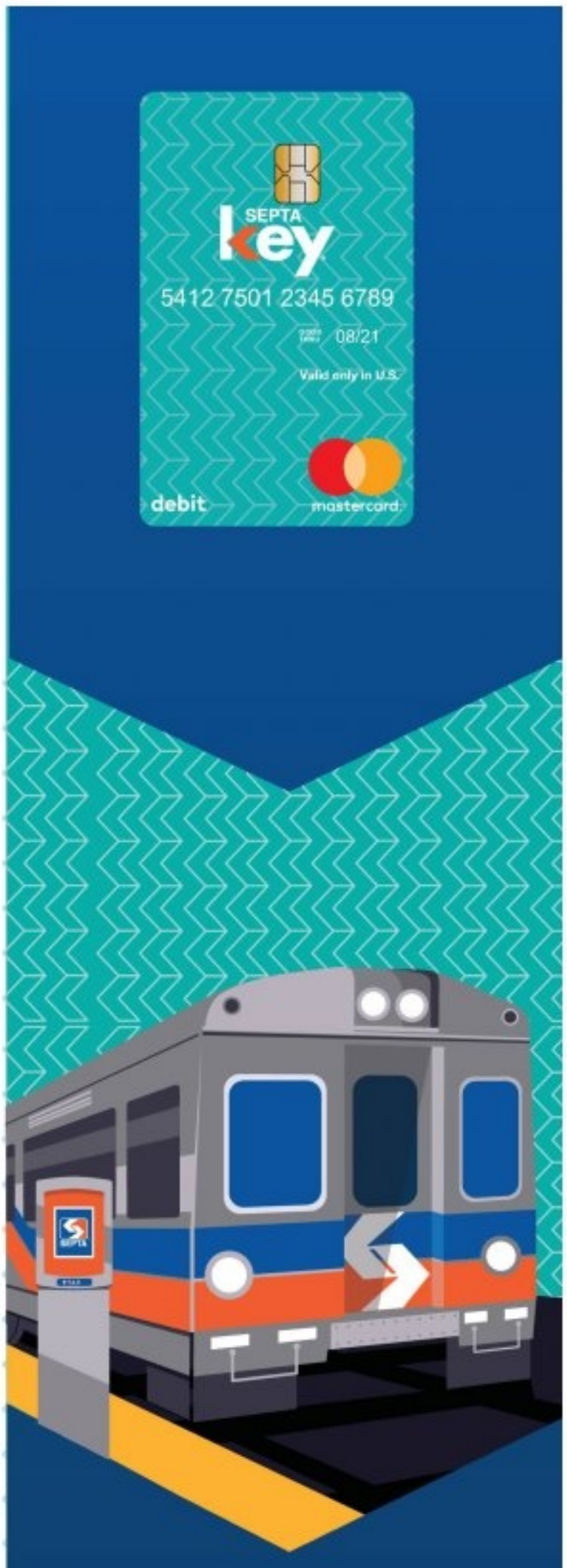

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